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LETTER DATED 27 MAY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The Government of Uganda is greatly perturbed by the unending and deranged accusations directed at it by the Government of Rwanda. Rwanda has used its privileged position as representative of the Central African region on the Security Council to distort the truth about the situation in Rwanda and to launch an unwarranted attack on the President and Government of Uganda.

This Mission has so far replied twice to prior accusations, but the latest ones, contained in document S/1994/586 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda in his letter to you dated 17 May 1994, have gone too far. I wish to request that you convene an urgent meeting of the Security Council and permit me to make a statement condemning these lies. I also wish to make a comprehensive rebuttal of those accusations in the present correspondence.

Uganda has never committed a single act of aggression against Rwanda. The attack launched on 1 October 1990 against the Government of Rwanda was conducted by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) without any assistance whatsoever from the Government of Uganda. President Yoweri Museveni condemned the attack, which was carried out by former refugees from Rwanda, some of whom had lived in Uganda for over 30 years, calling it an abuse of the hospitality that the Uganda Government had extended to the refugees for that period. President Museveni, who was also Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at the time of the attack, had been involved in talks with the Rwandese refugees and the Government of the late President Juvenal Habyarimana aimed at finding means for the return and resettlement of the refugees, but the Rwandese Government had refused to consider any such plan, reasoning that Rwanda was "too small" to accommodate its own people. The refugees finally ran out of patience and hence the attack.

During the period that the Rwandese refugees lived outside their country, they engaged in normal activities similar to those of the population among which they lived. It is a well known fact that Uganda went through a period of civil wars from 1966 to the mid-1980s. The Rwandese refugees in Uganda were part of

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this war situation and some of them did in fact take up arms and fight alongside Ugandans and it is there that they acquired some military skills and entered the ranks of the Ugandan army. They however remained Rwandese, a part of a diaspora that was denied access to their homeland. They were obviously not satisfied with their status and continued to engage in dialogue with the Government of Rwanda with the assistance of regional leaders, including President Museveni; however they received no promises or illusions from the Rwandese Government that they would one day be allowed to return to Rwanda. In October 1990, their frustration erupted into a military conflict.

RPF has in fact frequently taken responsibility for stealing Ugandan government equipment, vehicles and arms to launch their first attack. That task was made easier by the fact that some of the refugees who had joined the military during the Ugandan civil wars now had access to the equipment. Anyone without knowledge of the history of Rwanda, as outlined in our earlier letter to you, might be excused for misinterpreting the above facts to read that Uganda was in some way involved. The Ugandan Government, the President in particular, has laboured to explain that history to anyone who cares to pay attention. However, the Government of Rwanda knows the history of its refugees best of all and it is most unscrupulous for it to distort the facts in order to transfer blame for its failings.

Even more unacceptable is the obvious attempt to increase the focus of attention of the international community on the war between its government forces and RPF, whereas the main catastrophe in the Rwandese episode is the killing of the civilian population by trained militias all over the country. The outrage is that the killings are not sporadic and aimless ones, but rather they are a calculated extermination of a minority ethnic group, a genocide that has been unleashed on the people by a tyrannical Government. All the baseless raving by a Government that has lost control of its people and can no longer assert its sovereignty will not erase that cruel fact: the genocide.

Furthermore the Arusha accord has been upheld by many as the basis for settling the Rwanda crisis. In that accord, the Rwandese Government agreed to share power with RPF in Arusha. To turn around now and refer to RPF as Ugandan aggression is not only confusing and misleading, but also shows the deranged nature of these accusations as far as it suggests that the Rwandese Government agreed in Arusha to share power with the Ugandan aggressor! It also implies that the Rwandese Government has returned to its 1987 position when the Central Committee of late Habyarimana's party declared that Rwanda was not responsible for the Rwandese in the diaspora.

United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR)

The United Nations has deployed military observers along the Uganda-Rwanda border for a period of one year and their mandate has recently been renewed for a further six months. That Mission is in fact monitoring the border daily under the command of a neutral United Nations representative.

Prior to that Mission, there were observers from OAU and also from the Government of Rwanda. The monitors were put there for one purpose: to ensure

that there was no infiltration of troops or military equipment from the Ugandan side of the border to RPF and thereby allay the suspicions of the Government of Rwanda that Uganda was in some way supporting RPF. To date, not a single report has been made by any of those observers indicating that there was infiltration through that border. However the Rwandese Government chooses not to believe the reports and continues its desperate accusations. It is very difficult to impress the truth on the Rwandese Government because it believes it would be robbed of its only means of distraction, its only hope of explaining this tragedy with any semblance of reason.

False link between RPF and the Ugandan authorities

RPF does not have headquarters in Kampala, as alleged on page 5 of document S/1994/586, nor does the Ugandan Government have any member of RPF on its payroll. Uganda remains host to thousands of Rwandese refugees and some may be related to officers of RPF but all of them are treated by the Government as they have been for the last three decades.

It is difficult to understand what the authors of the document hoped to achieve by lying about the nationality of Ugandan leaders, including that of the President; but to put the record straight, the President of Uganda and those whose names I recognize in the document are indeed Ugandans. However some names and titles listed, I have never heard of and some of those mentioned are long dead. An update on the structure of the Ugandan Government, including names, is readily available at this Mission.

The link between demobilization of soldiers of the Ugandan Army and RPF is too ridiculous to warrant a detailed explanation. Suffice it to say that the administrative programmes of the Ugandan Army are not dictated by the situation in Rwanda but by that pertaining in Uganda.

Calls by the Rwandese government representatives for an arms embargo on Uganda are therefore calculated messages by dictatorships in our region to render Uganda incapable of defending itself so that the new democratic order in our country is suppressed by arms.

In conclusion, the Ugandan Government condemns very strongly the use of malicious and false propaganda by the Government of Rwanda to discredit Uganda's image in international forums.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Perezi K. KAMUNANWIRE
Permanent Representative